

# **DOMINGUEZ WATERSHED ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## **CHARTER**



**Prepared by  
The Dominguez Watershed Management  
Outline Committee**

**For  
The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council**

**Adopted  
March 2003**

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## Appendix B (To Be Developed)

Organization Chart

Master Plan Scope of Work

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# Vision And Mission Statements



## ***Vision Statement:***

An urban industrial watershed in balance with the environment.

## ***Explanation:***

The Dominguez Watershed consists of the channel, its tributaries, its ground water, and the land that drains to them. The components listed below must work in harmony for the vitality of the river to be realized. The watershed basin is far larger than the channel, encompassing lands within the Cities of Torrance, Hawthorne, Los Angeles, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, Lomita, Lawndale, Manhattan Beach, El Segundo, Inglewood, Gardena, Carson, Ranchos Palos Verdes, Palos Verdes Estates, and Los Angeles County. When people think of the Dominguez Channel, the concrete channel may come first to mind, but the entire drainage area is vital to the health of the system.

**Water Quality:** A watershed that contributes water of such quality that people can use it for approved recreation, work, and the support of terrestrial and aquatic life.

**Natural Resources:** A balanced ecosystem that supports its component parts throughout the Dominguez Watershed including a varied habitat that thrives in the watershed.

**Use of Resources:** Wise stewardship of the resources to maximize their renewal and minimize permanent loss.

**Land Use:** Recognize that owners of property within the watershed have land use rights, as well as responsibility to protect the welfare of the ecosystem through the use of their land.

**Recreation:** A watershed that provides various types of recreation and an experience that fosters an appreciation of the watershed's natural resources.

**Economics:** A watershed that provides water quality and quantity sufficient to support a viable and healthy community in which its citizens are proud to live, work, and recreate.

**Education:** An informed populace that understands and appreciates the watershed, its ecosystem and needs, and works to achieve them.

## ***Mission Statement:***

To foster better understanding and stewardship of the Dominguez Watershed, promote resource restoration, and ensure sustainable watershed health, functions, and uses.

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# Charter

**char-ter** *noun*

1. a formal written statement of the aims and principles of an organization.



## ***Purpose***

The purpose of DWAC is to create and support implementation of a comprehensive watershed management master plan (WMMP), which will address current and potential problems and issues, potential solutions, prioritization of projects, funding opportunities, restoration and enhancement measures, and monitoring programs within the Dominguez Watershed.

## ***Goals and Objectives***

- Raise public awareness of the Dominguez Watershed and encourage participation in management and protection of our watershed resources.
- Identify problems and issues of importance to local citizens, groups, and users of the watershed.
- Diminish and eliminate further degradation of the watershed and its resources through better management practices.
- Promote science-based methods for water quality and environmental impact assessment.
- Restore and enhance ecological systems.
- Promote, preserve, and protect beneficial uses.
- Increase the viability, diversity, and health of the watershed.
- Develop an effective approach to meeting water quality regulations.

## ***Specific Responsibilities***

- Establish a public involvement program to ensure an appropriate level of citizen participation in the Advisory Council's work.
- Help resolve issues among diverse interests in the watershed.
- Seek funding to support program development and implementation, including funding from agencies, municipalities, associations and residents represented on the Advisory Council.
- Address the needs and concerns of the respective agencies, organization, and interests represented on the Advisory Council.
- Adopt and implement a work program, monitor work program progress and budget.
- Identify ongoing education programs in the watershed.

## ***Relationship to Decision-Making Bodies and Local Communities***

The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council is an advisory body to the established decision-making agencies and local communities. As such, the Advisory Council makes recommendations concerning the protection, restoration, and enhancement of the quality of the Dominguez Watershed.

The agencies, organizations, and interests represented on the Advisory Council are not obligated to adopt or carry out the recommendation of the Advisory Council, but will give due consideration to the recommendations and take actions they consider appropriate. The agencies, organizations, and interests will report back to the Advisory Council on any actions taken in response to Advisory Council recommendations.

The Advisory Council welcomes and will respond to requests for advice on actions affecting the watershed that are proposed by local, state, and federal agencies, organizations or interests.

Council members will keep their respective agencies, organizations, and interests informed about the work of the Advisory Council and will bring their concerns to the Advisory Council.

### ***Council Members***

The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council may include representatives from the following interests:

- Local Government
- Oil Refineries
- Industry
- Port Districts
- Home Owner Groups
- Chambers of Commerce
- Boat Owners
- Environmental Groups/Non-Profit
- Water and Wastewater districts
- Resource Agencies
- Citizens/Other
- Cities
- Counties
- Regulatory Agencies
- Science and Research Organizations

Technical, legal, and regulatory assistance may be provided by Technical Assistance Committees (TACs) and will provide reports and recommendations on issues to the Advisory Council.

The members shall serve at the pleasure of their respective agencies and organizations. Advisory Council members may designate an alternate who will participate on the Advisory Council in their absence.

The Advisory Council will act to replace members who resign or are unable to continue serving on the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will request the agency or organization to nominate a replacement representative. If the agency or organization is unable or unwilling to do so, the Advisory Council will seek representation from another agency or organization of similar interest.

### ***Amendments***

An Advisory Council member may propose amendments to the ground rules at any time. Amendments will become effective at the time proposed if all Advisory Council members approve. Otherwise, amendments will become effective at the meeting following the proposal upon consensus of those present.



# Strategic Plan Functional Areas 2001 - 2004



## **Introduction:**

This section summarizes a strategic planning effort conducted by the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council from January 2001 through September 2004. This undertaking will establish program direction by defining functional areas within which the Advisory Council may implement programs and provide services, prioritizing actions for each of the functional areas, identifying and scheduling the tasks necessary to achieve the established priorities, and outlining what the Advisory Council expects to accomplish over the next three years.

## **Next Steps**

In 2003, the Advisory Council will complete a planning process to strengthen its organizational capacity, to clarify future direction, establish priorities, and build teamwork. It will also continue with its wet weather scientific studies, solicit additional funding to continue its research work, and follow up with its outreach activities to involve the U.S. Department of Energy and Lawrence Livermore and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories.

By 2004, the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council will prepare and adopt the Dominguez Watershed Management Master Plan -- a long-term vision on how to improve water quality, improve fish and wildlife habitat, minimize soil erosion, improve flood protection, conserve water and increase recreational opportunities within the Dominguez Watershed. The Watershed Management Master Plan will take a watershed-wide approach. Implementation of the Watershed Management Master Plan will involve various Advisory Council members, organizations, and other private and public stakeholders.

## **Strategic Priorities**

The strategic plan is organized around four main functional areas aimed at achieving the Advisory Council's vision:

- Watershed Enhancement
- Issue Forum
- Education & Outreach
- Organizational Development

## **I. Watershed Enhancement**

Water is the essential resource upon which all living things depend. Human activities affect water primarily during the terrestrial portion of the water cycle - the journey through the watershed from the mountains to the ocean. When water is in our watershed we have our greatest opportunity to protect and improve it.

Watersheds are a complex web of interrelated components - human, plant, animal, soil, air, and water. A change in one part may be reflected throughout the system. It is important for the community to take responsibility for wise management of all the resources within the watershed.

**Goal: To provide a foundation for implementing coordinated resource enhancement and restoration projects by integrating watershed information and plans.**

- Objective 1. Develop a Dominguez Watershed Master Plan.
- Objective 2. Implement partnered watershed improvement projects.

## II. Issue Forum

Collaborative resource management requires a decision-making approach that involves all the interests that have a stake in the outcome. Stakeholders identify problems, share responsibility for developing proposals for dealing with the problem, and mutually agree on a solution strategy. The process encourages a collaborative effort that emphasizes consensus building.

The Advisory Council will operate by consensus to the extent possible, for both substantive matters and major procedural matters such as adoption of the ground rules. Generally, 'consensual' means that all stakeholders can agree to or at least abide by the proposed approach, even if the member might prefer another approach.

**Goal: To serve as a role model and forum for open discussion and collaborative resolution of watershed issues.**

- Objective 1. Provide a forum for discussion of watershed issues.
- Objective 2. Increase community awareness of Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council activities.
- Objective 3. Clarify Advisory Council member roles and responsibilities.

## III. Education & Outreach

Fundamental to promoting watershed stewardship is increasing each member's understanding of watershed science. No single field of knowledge or personal experience can encompass the range of complexity that defines watershed function. Only by sharing information with each other can the Dominguez Watershed stakeholders continue to base protection actions on sound science and mutual respect.

**Goal: To raise awareness and promote positive, cooperative action in support of a healthy watershed by providing information to all watershed stakeholders.**

- Objective 1. Increase information distribution.
- Objective 2. Serve as an information clearinghouse.
- Objective 3. Conduct outreach to groups involved in the development process (e.g. planners, developers, and local elected officials).
- Objective 4. Establish partnerships with other groups within the watershed.

## IV. Organizational Development

Support for the activities of the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council stems from appropriate organizational roots. Advisory Council members (stakeholder's group and committee members), are the foundation upon which watershed enhancement, issues forum, and education & outreach activities are built. Increasing the Advisory Council's organizational capacity (ability to function as a group) ensures the Advisory Council's effectiveness in pursuing its mission and achieving its watershed vision.

**Goal: To provide the human and financial resources to enable accomplishment of the Advisory Council's objectives: watershed enhancement, issue forum, and education & outreach.**

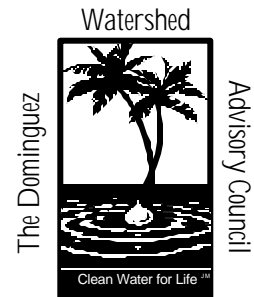
- Objective 1. Research Advisory Council program funding options (for operations and programs).
- Objective 2. Serve as an Advisory Council to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- Objective 3. Provide leadership opportunities to all members.

## Appendix A

### What is a Watershed Advisory Council?

**wa-ter-shed** *noun* Geography - region draining into river or ocean 1. the area of land that water flows across, or under, on its way to a river, lake or ocean 2. the region or area drained by a river, stream, creek etc.; drainage area.

**coun-cil** *noun* Public Administration - people running local affairs: 1. a group of people appointed or chosen to perform a function on behalf of a larger group.



The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council was formed to share information, reduce duplication of activities, help address watershed management issues in the Dominguez Watershed, and provide a framework for coordination and cooperation among all interests. Specifically, the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council (Advisory Council) was developed to create a Watershed Management Master Plan for the Dominguez Watershed that will establish sound measures to protect and improve its environment and beneficial uses. This Advisory Council is a locally organized, voluntary, non-regulatory group established to improve the conditions of watersheds in its local area. This Advisory Council represents a wide variety of interests in the watershed and is balanced in its makeup. It brings together local stakeholders from private, local, state, and federal interests in a partnership, to plan watershed protection and restoration strategies in a holistic way. Through this watershed partnership, the Advisory Council members collaborate to identify issues, promote cooperative solutions, focus resources, agree on goals for watershed protection and enhancement, and foster communication among all watershed interests.

### ***What is the benefit to local and surrounding communities of forming the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council?***

The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council is comprised of people from the local and surrounding communities. They represent specific knowledge with ties to the existing community and its complexity. This Watershed Advisory Council will work across jurisdictional boundaries and across agency mandates to look at the watershed in a comprehensive manner. The Advisory Council may be a forum to bring in local, state, and federal resource management agencies, local government officials and staff, and environmental professionals to plan together with local property owners and private industry managers. The Advisory Council forum provides local people and affected interests with a voice in natural resource management that may significantly influence watershed management decisions.

### ***What will the Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council do?***

This Advisory Council will plan, develop, and implement prioritized projects to maintain and restore the biological, chemical, and physical integrity in the Dominguez Watershed for the sustainability of their communities. The Advisory Council will bring varied interests together in a non-regulatory setting to form a common vision for the ecological and economic sustainability and livability of their watershed. The Advisory Council will identify landowner participants for important projects, develop priorities for local projects, and establish goals and standards for future conditions in the watershed. On-site projects will be implemented in an effort to enhance the watershed's ability to capture, store, and beneficially use the waters. Education projects will be undertaken to inform people about watershed processes and functions. This Advisory Council will

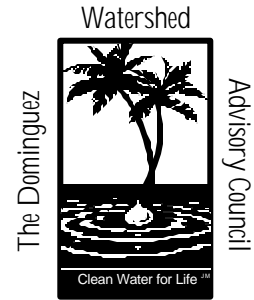
provide coordinated, broad-based review of resource management plans to local, state, and federal decision-makers.

The Watershed Management Master Plan (Plan) will include: (1) a physical description of the Watershed and the sub-Watersheds, (2) a discussion of the existing Environmental Conditions, (3) a summary of the state of the Beneficial Use Listings, (4) a discussion of the Watershed Management Issues, and (5) a Strategic Plan to implement the prioritized projects. This plan adopted by the Advisory Council will provide guidelines to ensure effective implementation of the prioritized projects that achieve measurable environmental improvement. In addition, it is anticipated that the Plan will be timely in providing justifications crucial for taking advantage of funding opportunities and may establish a long-term, comprehensive monitoring plan to track the ecological conditions of the watershed.

Finally, the Plan will support many important informational needs for water quality and natural resource management agencies including data required to update the Clean Water Act 303 (d) list, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Basin Plan, and the development and implementation of TMDLs (including coliform and heavy metals scheduled for Dominguez watershed). The Watershed Management Master Plan is scheduled to be completed by July 2004.

## Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council History

The South Bay region of Los Angeles County, which includes the Dominguez Watershed, confronts tremendous urban, industrial, and development pressures. With forecasts of thousands of additional people living in the South Bay region in the next twenty years, the need to protect our natural resources is critical. The Dominguez Watershed faces tremendous challenges including high density development; conversion of remaining open space; flooding and development on floodplains; intense transportation pressures; increased demands for water and sewer services; reduction of wetland, riparian areas, and fish and wildlife habitat; and pollution of waterways. The Environmental Protection Agency through the California State Water Resources Control Board has designated segments of the Dominguez Channel, Wilmington Drain, Torrance Lateral, Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbors, and Machado Lake as "Water Quality Impaired." Industrial and urban interests are working hard to meet their NPDES requirements and are now addressing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). Continuing urbanization of basin lands and competing demands for industrial and recreational uses of surface waters add to the complexity of the Dominguez Channel's needs. The wide variety of land uses throughout the watershed has a significant impact on water quality and quantity which must be addressed in a comprehensive manner.



The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works submitted an application to the State Water Resources Control Board in February 2001 requesting funds to create a Watershed Management Master Plan for the Dominguez Watershed. Immediately following the submittal of this application a group of businesses, private citizens, environmental groups, and government representatives met to discuss the creation of this plan and initiated the Dominguez Channel Watershed Advisory Council. The word "Channel" was dropped from the name in 2002 to reflect the inclusion of portions of the watershed that do not drain directly to the channel. The Dominguez Watershed Advisory Council is motivated by a common belief that we need to minimize watershed impacts, develop local solutions in a comprehensive manner, and provide for coordinated resource planning in the Dominguez Watershed.

In February 2001 the purpose of the Dominguez Channel Watershed Advisory Council was to:

- Increase the participation of local and affected interests in the management of watershed resources.
- Initiate resolution of problems and issues within the watershed.
- Identify problems and issues of importance to local citizens, groups, and users of the watershed.
- Diminish and eliminate further degradation of the watershed and its resources through better management practices.
- Increase the viability, diversity, and health of the watershed.
- Undertake a proactive approach in management of the watershed.
- Create and implement a Watershed Management Master Plan (Plan)

This Advisory Council is not a regulatory or enforcement agency. Instead, it will make recommendations to decision-makers and resource managers on ways to protect and enhance Dominguez Watershed's environment and beneficial uses. The Advisory Council strives to provide a framework for coordination and cooperation and uses consensus as its decision-making process. The 70 + member Advisory Council represents key interests and stakeholders in the watershed, ensuring a comprehensive look at watershed issues. Advisory Council members also regularly communicate with other groups and individuals, forming an even broader network of watershed stakeholders.

In March 2001, the group met to determine membership, outline a mission and vision statement, develop procedures and protocols, and to formulate goals and objectives. The Advisory Council will endeavor to be recognized by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors with representatives of the following stakeholder groups: citizens, business and industry, environmental, local governments, chambers of commerce, and water and wastewater service providers.

To assist with development of the Watershed Management Master Plan, the Advisory Council will convene Technical Assistance Committees (TACs) comprised of scientists, consultants and government officials with expertise in environmental science, biology, wetlands ecology, soil science, water quality, engineering, wildlife habitat, and hydrology. The TAC's will meet periodically to review and evaluate existing information, identify problem areas, and recommend actions to the Advisory Council.

With the adoption of the Watershed Management Master Plan, the Advisory Council will work on implementation of several identified projects. The Advisory Council will provide an avenue for promoting better cooperation and understanding among all stakeholders, and achieving a shared vision for the future of the watershed.

Specific Issues identified to be addressed:

- 303(d) list
- Beneficial uses for channel/receiving waters
- Contact recreation
- Economics of tourism and fishing
- Flood control
- Groundwater
- Habitat
- Illegal dumping
- Interim permitting
- Inventory of the dischargers/discharges
- Land development
- Land use
- Natural resources
- Naturescaping/Landscaping
- Non-contact recreation
- NPDES permit
- Open space
- Point/Non point source pollution
- Projected growth
- Rare, threatened and endangered species
- Reclaimed water
- Research and monitoring
- Seasonal and annual trends
- Sea water barrier
- Sediment quality
- Soil
- Sources of contamination
- Spreading grounds
- Stormwater
- Surface waters
- The Harbor
- TMDLs
- Water retention
- Water sources
- Watershed boundaries